

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9045

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 5200

NODIS - CHEROKEE

FOR ASST SECY MOOSE AND LAKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SF US

SUBJ: PROPOSED STATEMENT BY VICE PRESIDENT

REF: STATE 233826

1. I SEE LITTLE PROSPECT OF ARTICLE ALONG LINES CONTAINED
REFTEL HAVING MUCH IMPACT ON OFFICIAL ATTITUDES HERE, BUT
IN CONTEXT OF HELPING US EXPLAIN US POLICY TO SOUTH
AFRICAN PUBLIC--AND I ALSO ASSUME PUBLIC OPINION IN THE
US--I THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL.

2. VORSTER WILL LOOK AT SUCH A STATEMENT TO SEE WHETHER:
(A) IT CONTAINS ANY RETREAT FROM THE POLICY PRESENTED
TO HIM AT VIENNA, WHICH HE COULD USE IN THE ELECTORAL
CAMPAIGN TO SAY THAT BY STANDING UP TO THE US HE MADE
THEM BACK DOWN, OR (B) IT REPRESENTS A TOUGHER AMERICAN
STAND, WHICH HE COULD USE TO PLAY ON THE LAAGER INSTINCTS
OF THE WHITE POPULATION. (SEE PRETORIA 5089 ANALYZING
THE EMERGIN SIEGE MENTALITY.)

3. AN ARTICLE STRESSING THE REASONABLENESS OF OUR
APPROACH AND THE PREROGATIVE OF THE SAG TO CHOOSE THE
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COURSE IT WHISHES TO FOLLOW WILL MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR
VORSTER TO ATTACK CONVINCINGLY AND WILL REINFORCE OUR
EFFORTS TO GET THAT MESSAGE ACROSS TO THE RANK AND
FILE HERE. REITERATION OF US POLICY AT A HIGH LEVEL
IN OBJECTIVE, DISPASSIONATE TERMS, WHILE AT THE SAME
TIME WE WORK CONSTRUCTIVELY IN TRYING TO FIND PEACEFUL
SOLUTIONS TO THE RHODESIAN AND NAMIBIAN PROBLEMS, HAS

THE ADDED ADVANTAGE OF MAINTAINING STEADY, UNDRAMATIC PRESSURE ON VORSTER. FOR REASONS EXPLAINED IN PRETORIA 5089, I THINK THIS IS THE KIND OF PRESSURE TO WHICH VORSTER RESPONDS AND HAS MUCH TO DO WITH DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY HE DISPLAYS ON THOSE TWO FRONTS AND IN MOVING ON DOMESTIC ISSUES, LIMITED AS THESE MAY BE.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE CONTENT OF THE ARTICLE, I WOULD MAKE THESE SUGGESTIONS (TO FACILITATE IDENTIFICATION, I HAVE LISTED PARAGRAPHS OF ARTICLE CONTAINED IN PARA 3 OF REFTTEL STARTING WITH (A) AND RUNNING THROUGH (X)):

-- IN SECOND SENTENCE OF SUBPARA (H), I WONDER WHETHER WE CANNOT DEVISE A LESS CAUTIOUS DESCRIPTION OF SAG'S ROLE THAN "ELEMENTS OF FLEXIBILITY IN THE SA POSITION." WE WANT TO AVOID OVERSTATING THEIR COOPERATION, I REALIZE. PERHAPS LAST PHASE MIGHT READ, "...REMAIN, SA HAS CONTRIBUTED TO EFFORTS TO FIND SOLUTIONS AND WE CONTINUE TO WELCOME THESE."

-- IN LAST SENTENCE OF SUBPARA (1), USE OF LANGUAGE "...MUST BEGIN SOON IF IT IS TO BE MADE AT ALL" WILL BE TAKEN BY SOUTH AFRICANS AS DICTATION. I WOULD REPHRASE IT "...PROGRESS TOWARD THESE GOALS, IF IT IS TO BE ACHIEVED CONSTRUCTIVELY AND PEACEFULLY, WILL HAVE TO BEGIN SOON."

-- IN THE THIRD SENTENCE OF SUBPARA (P), IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ADD AFTER "SPECIFIC POLITICAL STRATEGY" CONFIDENTIAL

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THE WORDS "WITH A PREDETERMINED TIMETABLE." THIS ADDITION MEETS THE CHARGE OF IMMEDIATE APPLICATION OF ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE. AFTER THIS SENTENCE, IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL TO EXPAND ON THE CONCEPT EXPRESSED IN THE SECOND SENTENCE BY GOING ON TO SAY, "IT IS A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE, NOT A PRESCRIPTION. HOW THE PRINCIPLE IS PUT INTO PRACTICE IS FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO DECIDE. THE STATEMENT SHOULD NOT BE USED..."

-- IN SUBPARA (R), SUGGEST THAT WE ADD "ELIMINATION OF DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL" TO LIST OF EXAMPLES OF CORRECTIVE ACTION SAG COULD TAKE.

-- THE THOUGHT CONTAINED IN THE LAST SENTENCE OF SUBPARA (T) MIGHT BE EXPANDED WITH THE ADDITION OF THIS NEW SUBPARA: "WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE WHITES OF SOUTH AFRICA HAVE MADE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BUILDING OF A MODERN ECONOMY THAT HAS THE CAPACITY TO PROVIDE DECENT LIVING STANDARDS FOR ALL IN THE SOCIETY. NOT ONLY DO WHITES HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN AND ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA, BUT THEY ARE NEEDED TO CONTINUE WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY. BOTH BLACKS AND WHITES HAVE A GREAT STAKE IN THE PRESERVATION OF

THIS ASSET AND IN SEEING TO IT THAT THE CHANGES THAT
WILL INEVITABLY TAKE PLACE ARE ORDERLY AND PEACEFUL."

-- IN SUBPARA (W), I WOULD DELETE THE REFERENCE
TO STEVE BIKO'S DEATH. UNTIL THE PATHOLOGISTS' REPORT
IS OUT, IT WOULD EXPOSE THE VICE PRESIDENT TO THE
CRITICISM OF PREJUDGING THE RESULTS.

5. WHILE THE QUOTE FROM BIKO IN SUBPARA (V) IS A GOOD
ONE, YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT THE MEDIA HERE MAY NOT BE
ABLE TO USE IT BECAUSE A BANNED PERSON MAY NOT BE QUOTED--
EVEN WHEN DEAD-- WITHOUT A WAIVER OF THE PROHIBITION.
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